

ITEM 7 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2020-2025

The Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan [DIAP] will support Council to meet its obligations under the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*. This Act requires all NSW councils to develop and implement a DIAP. The Draft DIAP outlines Council's strategies and actions to promote the inclusion of people with disability in community life and support improved access to Council services and facilities. The Draft DIAP is a whole of Council plan that has been informed via an extensive engagement process.

This report seeks Council's endorsement for the Draft DIAP 2020-2025 to be placed on public exhibition.

RECOMMENDATION

Council endorse the Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025 for public exhibition from 1 July to 5 August 2020 inclusive.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Sue Savage, Manager Community Cultural + Economic Development
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025
- 2 Disability Inclusion Action Plan Engagement Report 2020-2025

BACKGROUND

Council has continued to demonstrate commitment to people with disability and embraced the opportunity presented through the introduction of the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*. The Act requires Council to have a DIAP that demonstrates our commitment to supporting and enabling people with disability to participate equally in their communities. A DIAP is required to have four focus areas:

- Creating liveable communities
- Improving access to systems and processes
- Promoting positive attitudes and behaviours
- Supporting access to meaningful employment

The purpose of the Draft DIAP 2020-2025 is to ensure people with disability have equal access to information, services and facilities provided by Council and can participate in public spaces and public life. Supporting the development of an accessible and inclusive city will benefit people living in and visiting the Wollongong LGA. This also includes older people, people with chronic or temporary illness and parents of young children.

In 2016 Council launched an ambitious DIAP. The DIAP was a whole of Council plan, detailing 117 actions. It included seven objectives, two of which were focused on improving the way Council conducts business, and five targeted at promoting and supporting the inclusion of people with disability in community life. To date, 108 actions from the Plan have been delivered.

The Draft DIAP 2020-2025 includes background information, a demographic snapshot, a summary of the community engagement and a snapshot of our progress and achievements since 2016. It lists the strategies and actions Council will deliver in the next five years as they relate to each of the four focus areas and includes evaluation measures to monitor and measure progress. The delivery of the Draft DIAP 2020-2025 will be supported by a detailed implementation plan, to be provided to Council for information post exhibition.

Once adopted, the Draft DIAP 2020-2025 will be made publicly available on Council's website and be reviewed each year in consultation with people with disability to make sure it is relevant and meets the

needs of people with disability in our community. The plan will be lodged with the Disability Council NSW and each year a progress report will be provided to demonstrate Council's progress towards the delivery of the plan. Progress towards the delivery will be reported each year as part of Council's annual reporting process.

PROPOSAL

This report seeks Council's endorsement to place the Draft DIAP 2020-2025 on public exhibition from 1 July to 5 August 2020 inclusive.

The Draft DIAP 2020-2025 provides a strategic framework to guide Council in meeting its obligations under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014. The Draft DIAP 2020-2025 sets out Council's commitment to improving access and inclusion of people with disability over the next five years. Following public exhibition, the Draft DIAP 2020-2025 will be submitted to Council for adoption in August 2020.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

An extensive community engagement process has informed the development of the Draft DIAP 2020-2025 and included the following:

Community Engagement

- A DIAP Survey 2019 was completed by 178 people with disability and their carers. The Illawarra Regional Information Service analysed the results of this survey and prepared a comprehensive report.
- Two community workshops were held at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre and Corrimal Community Centre. 31 people with disability and their carers participated in conversations with Council officers.
- Two workshops with young people with disability were held. 50 young people participated in the workshops to discuss the barriers they experience in accessing services and facilities.
- Conversations were undertaken with 13 parents of children with disability.
- A presentation was provided to the Wollongong City Council's Access and Mobility Reference Group and feedback sought.

A summary of the community engagement results is included in Attachment 2. The survey, workshops and conversations with the community showed parking, footpaths and toilets were the most important services for people with disability and the highest priority to focus on improving. The 2019 survey results included some significant changes from the 2015 survey results including a 15% increase in people with disability participating in Council events and increased use of Council's website to access information.

Internal Engagement

- Council officers met to discuss the successes of the current DIAP and discuss priorities for the Draft DIAP 2025.
- A presentation to the Senior Leadership Team to share the successes of the current plan and present the results of community engagement and the proposed key focus areas moving forward to the new DIAP.
- Many conversations and small group discussions have been held across Council with divisions who have a role in the delivery of Council's DIAP. These discussions have included the drafting of strategies and actions, timeframes, resource impacts and evaluation measures to inform the development of the implementation plan that will support the delivery of the Draft DIAP 2020-2025.

A steering group of senior and middle managers was established in April 2015. This group has met periodically to provide advice and oversee the development and implementation of Council's DIAP.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028 Goal “We are a connected and engaged community” and “We have a healthy community in a liveable city”. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan	Delivery Program 2018-2021	Operational Plan 2019-20
Strategy	3 Year Action	Operational Plan Actions
4.1.1 Provide residents with equitable access to information and opportunity to inform decisions.	4.1.1.1 Ensure an effective community engagement framework that connects the community to Council decision making.	Actively engage people with disability and carers in the delivery, evaluation and monitoring of the DIAP 2016-2020.
5.1.3 Involvement in lifelong learning, skills enhancement and community-based activities is promoted.	5.1.3.1 Deliver a diverse suite of projects to the community that foster and enhance community strengths and participation.	Implement, monitor and report on DIAP 2020-2025.

The introduction of the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014* has made it a legislative requirement for Council to have a DIAP. The plan has been developed in accordance with the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines Local Government.

Council has before it, on this agenda, the Draft Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy. The Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan strategically aligns to the policy and delivers on its intent through the strategies and actions contained within the draft plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The delivery of the Draft DIAP 2020-2025 is primarily funded through existing operational and capital budgets. Some of the strategies and actions in the Plan are already identified in the Wollongong City Council Infrastructure Delivery Program and do not require additional funds.

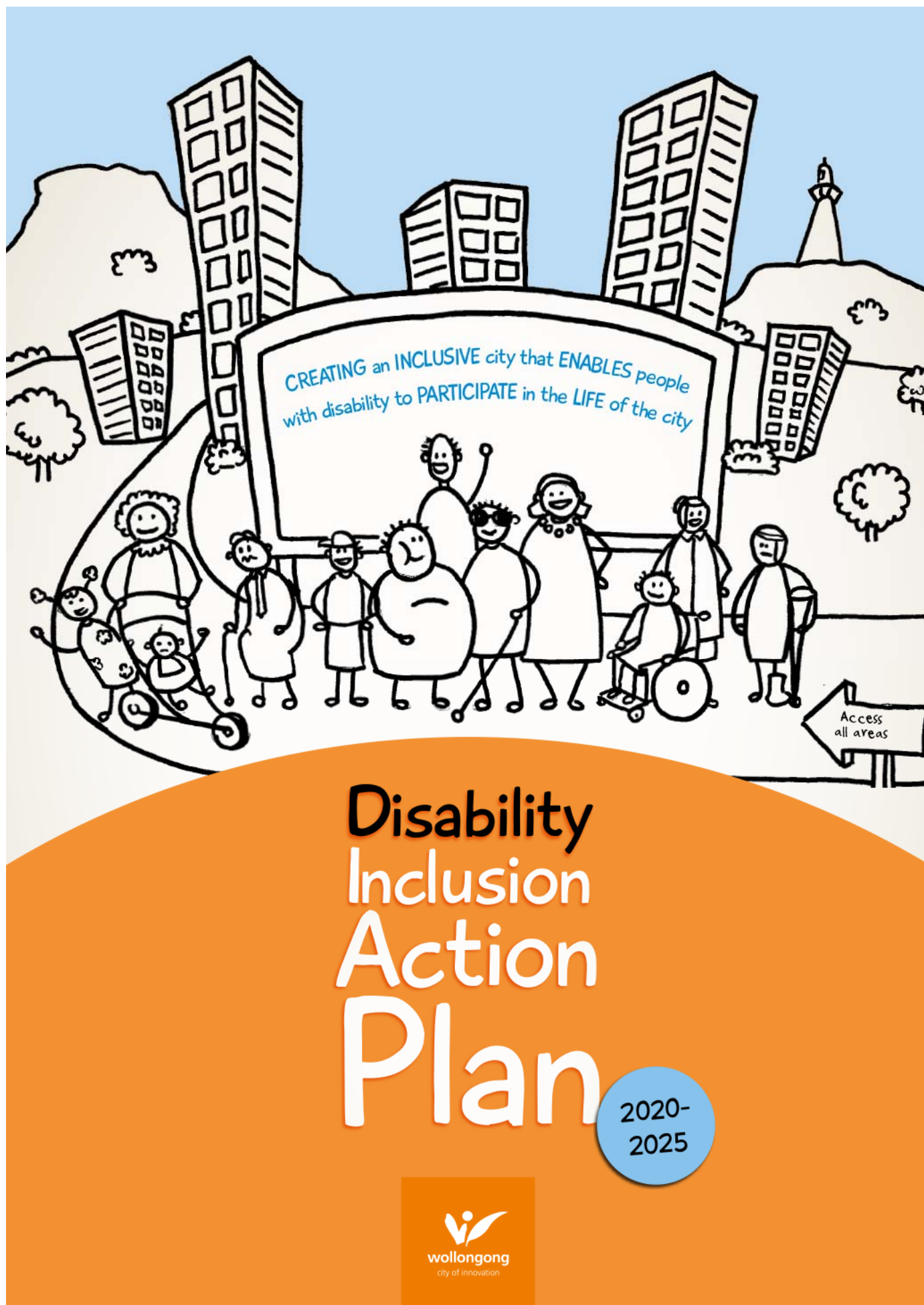
Access audits were completed as part of the delivery of Council’s DIAP 2016-2020, including audits of Council’s accessible public toilets, bus stops and shelters, foot paths and designated accessible parking in Council car parks. These audits have provided data and information to show work that needs to be undertaken to bring our existing assets in line with current disability access standards and, in some cases, will identify where Council will need to build new assets. As the data from these audits is used to inform a strategic and holistic approach, additional funding may be required, such as the delivery of the Public Toilet Strategy or the Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028.

Other strategies and actions require us to work differently rather than requiring additional funding. Some strategies are unfunded and will be considered as part of the preparation of the delivery program and each year as part of the annual planning process.

A detailed implementation plan will be provided to Council for information following public exhibition which will outline the funded actions and show any funding gaps.

CONCLUSION

Council has a key role to support the creation of an inclusive city that enables people with disability to participate equally in all aspects of city life. The Draft DIAP 2020-2025 will guide Council in meeting its obligations under the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014* and provide a well-informed strategic approach to supporting people with disability to participate fully in community life and access Council facilities, services and information.



Acknowledgement of Country

Wollongong City Council would like to show
 their respect and acknowledge the Traditional
 Custodians of the Land, Elders past and present,
 and to extend that respect to other Aboriginal
 and Torres Strait Islander people.

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Message from the Lord Mayor

It is my pleasure to present Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025. At Council, we are striving to make Wollongong a City that is inclusive of everyone and provides equal opportunity for people with disability to participate in all aspects of life across our City.

An inclusive community promotes and supports diversity and offers choice. Together, these lead to increased opportunity for people with disability.

That is why Council is making sure access and inclusion is a key consideration in everything we do - whether it's how we develop the built environment, how we provide information and services, or how we promote positive community attitudes and behaviours toward people with disability.

The Plan has been informed by many conversations with our diverse community, as well as feedback received through a community survey.

It sets out what Council will do in the next five years to continue making Wollongong a place that is accessible and inclusive of people with disability.

I am proud of Wollongong's diverse community and the richness difference brings to our City.

I would like to thank the many community members who took the time to give their ideas for making our community a better place for people with disability.

**Lord Mayor
Gordon Bradbery AM**



Message from the General Manager

I am proud to work with Council's Senior Leadership Team as champions of the delivery of our new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025. This Plan sets out our commitment to, and support of, improving access and inclusion of people with disability over the next five years.

We are focused on making Wollongong an extraordinary place - one that provides residents and visitors to the City with the best possible opportunity to participate in all aspects of community life.

For me, promoting and supporting the inclusion of people with disability is a big part of creating an extraordinary Wollongong.

It is my belief that promoting diversity, inclusion and belonging is essential business for everyone who works at Council. We are all advocates and we all play a part in making sure our City is a more inclusive place of all people, including those with disability.

As we work to deliver this Plan we are committed to continuing our conversations with people with disability.

This ongoing connection will help us to make sure we are getting it right. It's also part of our commitment to being leaders in everything we do, and to ensure we are supporting better access outcomes.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who was involved and helped us shape the development of this Plan. Your advice, feedback and suggestions are valued, and I look forward to hearing about the difference we are making through the delivery of the actions in this Plan.

**General Manager
Greg Doyle**



Introduction

Personal choice and control are only possible when communities are inclusive of all people, including people with disability. Real inclusion is achieved when people with disability are provided with equal opportunity to participate in community life.

In 2014 the NSW Government introduced the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014. The Act requires Council to have a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (Plan) that shows what we are doing to enable people with disability to participate equally in their communities.

The Act requires the Plan to have four focus areas:

- Creating liveable communities;
- Improving access to systems and processes;
- Promoting positive community attitude and behaviours;
- Supporting access to meaningful employment.

Council's first Plan was lodged with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission in 1997. This is our third Plan. Our focus is to be a leader in promoting the social and economic participation of people with disability. This Plan seeks to build on our previous achievements and the culture of inclusion across our organisation by continuously improving the way we go about our business. To achieve this, we have developed a carefully considered Implementation Plan to accompany this Plan. The Plan has been informed by extensive community engagement.

The Plan is underpinned by the following principles which support the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006):

- Focusing on abilities and not disabilities.
- Fundamental rights for all people.
- Genuine dialogue and participation.
- Improving access and inclusion for all.
- Prudent use of resources.
- Recognising the benefits of collaboration.
- Principles of Universal Design.
- Access is everyone's business.

Delivery of the actions in this Plan will benefit people in our community, including older people whose mobility and confidence to get about in public has decreased, people with a temporary injury and parents or carers with young children.

Why Inclusion is Important



- As a community, we are richer with a diverse range of viewpoints and individual perspectives.
- Exclusion leads to disadvantage and discrimination, which have far reaching negative impacts across all aspects of life, including health, welfare, education and employment. These impacts are felt beyond the individual, with families and the broader community being negatively impacted by a non-inclusive community.
- Employment can provide independence, reduce reliance on benefits and improve the living standards of people with disability. This can have positive health impacts and contribute to a greater sense of self-worth.
- There is a strong economic case to support inclusion in our community. Access to businesses benefits people with disability, older people, parents or carers with prams and business owners by expanding their business reach.



People with disability are diverse – they come from all different backgrounds, have different types of disability and varying needs for support.

The likelihood of living with disability increases with age – 1 in 9 people aged 0-64 live with disability, compared to 1 in 2 people aged 65+⁽²⁾

- 59% of people with disability need help with at least 1 daily living activity⁽²⁾
- 42% of adults with disability rate their health as poor or fair, compared to 7% of adults without disability⁽²⁾
- 1 in 5 people with disability who delayed seeing a doctor, did so because of the cost⁽²⁾
- 47% of adults with disability have experienced violence after the age of 15⁽²⁾
- 1 in 10 employed people aged 15-64 with disability are underemployed⁽²⁾
- 3 in 10 employed people aged 15-64 with disability want to work more hours⁽²⁾
- 59% of people with disability receive income support, compared with 15% of people without disability⁽²⁾



Profound or Severe Disability - Needing Assistance

6% or 13,090 people living in Wollongong have a need for assistance, meaning they need help with their day to day lives due to disability⁽³⁾



Income

28% of households with a need for assistance are low income (earn less than \$650/week) compared to 21% of all households⁽³⁾



Labour Force and Unemployment

14% of people with a need for assistance are unemployed compared to 7% of people without disability⁽³⁾



Social Housing

16% of people with a need for assistance live in social housing compared to 7% of people without disability⁽³⁾

Sources

1. ABS 2018, 4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings
2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019, People with disability in Australia
3. 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, compiled and presented by .ld Profile

Developing the Plan

Research

We did background research and looked at demographic data. We reviewed what was delivered from our last Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2016-2020.

Information Sharing and Raising Awareness

We talked about what we had done so far to improve access and inclusion, what we had learnt and ideas of what to do next. We talked about the benefits of the Plan and how we were going to update it.

Community Engagement

Community Survey

178 people with disability and their families, friends and carers completed a survey. The survey asked how often they use 24 of our services or facilities and how satisfied they were with these. Those surveyed shared their experiences and ideas on how we could make these services more accessible and inclusive.

Workshops and Community Conversations

97 people were involved across five workshops and three community conversations. We listened and talked with people with disability of all ages, carers and parents of children with disability.

Strategies and Actions

Draft strategies and actions were developed based on what the community told us was important.

Exhibition and Endorsement

The draft Plan was put on public exhibition for the community to give us feedback. The feedback was considered, and the revised Plan was endorsed by Council.

Lodgement

The endorsed Plan will be lodged with the Disability Council of NSW.

Council's Planning Process

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025 provides information about how we are going to make Wollongong a more inclusive and accessible place. It is a supporting document that will inform our Operational Plan.



Community Strategic Plan

A 10-year plan that outlines our community's vision and priorities for the future.



Supporting Documents

These documents provide more detail about how we are going to achieve positive outcomes for the community.



Delivery Program and Operational Plan

The Delivery Program sets out the key activities and projects that will be delivered to the community during the Council term. The Operational Plan includes Council's annual projects, activities and budgets.

Progress and achievements since 2016

In 2016, we launched an ambitious 4-year Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2016-2020. Here is a snapshot of what was achieved:

Create Liveable Communities

➡ We have completed audits of our footpaths, bus stops and shelters and accessible parking to inform future upgrades

➡ We have completed infrastructure projects to improve access to the built environment, including:

- Upgraded four accessible toilets (Bald Hill, Nicholson Park, Galvan Park and Thirroul Bathers Pavilion).
- Installed two adult change tables (Stuart Park and Western Suburbs).
- Installed accessible barbecues and picnic shelters (Stuart Park and Helensburgh).
- Upgraded 156 footpaths and kerb ramps.
- Installed three pool lifts (Western Suburbs, Berkeley and Helensburgh).
- Upgraded the accessible parking in 84 car parks.
- Upgraded 39 bus stops.
- Delivered 'Quick Links' accessible paths of travel project in seven locations to create continuous accessible paths of travel that link car parks, playgrounds, picnic shelters and toilet blocks.
- Improved access to several Council buildings, including accessible amenities at the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC), Coniston Community Centre, Mt Keira Summit Kiosk, Bulli Surf Life Saving Club and Stanwell Park Beach Kiosk, and, upgraded kitchen facilities including an adjustable bench at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre.
- Installed new cycleways, shared pathways and footpaths in 33 locations and the upgrade/renewal of existing cycleways, shared pathways and pathways in 28 locations.

Improve Access to our Systems and Processes

➡ We have worked to increase access to information, including:

- Upgraded our website to meet international disability access standards.
- Developed and installed Play Communication Boards at six Council playgrounds and a braille sign for Luke's Place Corrimal.
- Developed 'Social Stories' for our events, programs, services and facilities.
- Developed and delivered 'Autism Awareness Training' for 160+ Council officers.
- Provided 'Easy Read Training' for 15 Council officers.
- Developed an 'Easy Read Frequently Asked Questions Factsheet' about Council services.
- Established the 'Walking Cycling Mobility Reference Group' to provide advice to us about access matters.

Promote Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours

➡ We have promoted positive community attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability, including:

- Increased access at our events, including New Year's Eve, Australia Day, Comic Gong and Viva la Gong including accessible viewing areas, amenities and 'The Quiet Space'.
- Corrimal Library received their 'Autism Friendly' badge on World Autism Day.
- Provided Diversity Awareness Training for our staff.
- Delivered numerous inclusive programs at the Art Gallery, Libraries and Youth Services.
- Hosted an Auslan story time at Wollongong City Library.

Support Access to Meaningful Employment

We have worked to support people with disability to gain employment, including:

- Recruited two targeted traineeship positions for people with disability.
- Supported the 'Workers of Wollongong' Program by providing work experience opportunities at the Botanic Garden and Bulli Tourist Park.
- Developed and piloted a work experience program for young people with autism.
- Participated in mock interviews with people with disability to assist them in preparing for job interviews.
- Delivered the 'Employability Project' that raised awareness of people with disability in the workforce.



Meaningful employment

Case Study

Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2029

Our beaches and foreshores are valued by locals and visitors and form an important part of our City's identity. In June 2019, Council adopted a Plan to improve access and inclusion at our beaches.

The City has 17 beaches that are patrolled by our lifeguards and Surf Life Saving NSW volunteers. We asked people with disability what was needed to improve access to beaches and undertook an audit to give the 17 patrolled beaches an access rating.

From this we identified four beaches: Austinmer, Thirroul, North Wollongong and Port Kembla, as priority beaches for improving access. Upgrading these beaches to provide greater access for people with disability is a strong focus. Beach matting has been installed at both Thirroul and Austinmer beaches. Further access upgrades including accessible adult change facilities with hoists are planned for these beaches.



Beach matting



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Photo Credit: The Disability Trust

Case Study

Website Rebuild

We launched a new public website in 2019. The website has features to support access for people with disability including:

- A built-in accessibility auditor to check for issues that may not meet access standards.
- Uses colours, fonts and links, to support access.
- More content for people with disability, such as:
 - Social Stories for our facilities, services, and community events.
 - Access information for our playgrounds and Community Centre's and Hall's listings.
 - A map that shows the location of accessible parking spaces across the City.
 - Information about available support for people with disability.

Before the website was launched it was tested by people with disability including two people who were blind and use screen readers. They provided valuable feedback and were pleased with the site.



Wollongong City Council website rebuild

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Case Study

New Year's Eve Event



We have been working to make our events such as New Year's Eve, Australia Day, Comic Gong and Viva la Gong more inclusive. A 2015 survey of people with disability showed low satisfaction with our events. Since then we have worked with local stakeholders to improve our events.

To promote and support access and inclusion the following aspects have been introduced to New Year's Eve:

- A reserved accessible viewing area for viewing the fireworks and entertainment;
- 'The Quiet Space' to support people needing a break from noise and stimulation;
- Accessible parking spaces next to the reserved accessible viewing area;
- Entertainers with disability have performed at the event;
- A 'Site Map' that shows the accessible paths of travel and provides access information;
- A drop-off and pick-up zone close to the reserved accessible viewing area;
- A temporary accessible public toilet behind the reserved accessible viewing area;
- A factsheet of tips for stallholders about how they can make their stalls inclusive of people with disability;
- Added access information to the event brochures and webpage;
- An online booking system for the reserved accessible viewing area;
- Food stalls located on an accessible path of travel;
- Volunteers providing support in the reserved accessible viewing area;
- A visual display of the 10 to 0 countdown on a large screen to accompany the audio countdown to the fireworks.

Each year more and more people with disability and their families are coming to our New Year's Eve celebration. Volunteers enjoy working at the event and we receive positive feedback that volunteers are extremely friendly and helpful and that the inclusion of the seating area and parking arrangements for people with disability is greatly appreciated. Our survey of people with disability in 2019 showed a 15% increase in participation at our events.



Accessible viewing area at New Year's Eve



Aspect South Coast School for Children with Autism work experience

Case Study

Aspect South Coast School Work Experience Pilot Program

In June 2019, Aspect South Coast School for Children with Autism approached us with a work experience request. A six-week pilot program based on the needs and interests of the students was developed.

The program ran between October and December 2019. The students attended for two hours each week and were supported by their teachers. The students had the opportunity to work with different Council teams including Botanic Garden, Beaton Park, Leisure Centre, Foreshore Crew, Community Development and Youth Services.

The students who participated in the program indicated that they would recommend Council as a work experience opportunity to their friends and family. The teachers indicated that they *'absolutely'* and *'certainly would'* recommend the work experience program, saying *"it's such an excellent way for young people with disability to build life/work skills and a sense of belonging in their local community. It really will help to set them up for the future"*. Our staff indicated that the work experience program provided them with a great learning and development opportunity. Through communicating and working with young people with autism, staff were able to put into practice the autism awareness training they had completed.

Engagement

What the Community Told Us

People with disability, their families, friends and carers shared their experiences and ideas through a survey, workshops and conversations.

Community Survey Results



Our services and facilities that are high performing and are highly used:

- Botanic Garden.
- Council's Domestic, Recycling & Green Waste Collection Service.
- Council parks/open space/sportsfields for passive sport and recreation purpose.
- Council parks/open space/sports fields for active sports for active recreation purpose.
- Patrolled Beaches.



Our services and facilities that are low performing and highly used – priority areas for Council to improve:

- Public toilets.
- Designated parking for people with disability.
- Footpaths.
- Council-run events, festivals and activities.
- Council children's playgrounds.
- Cycleways/shared pathways.

Community Engagement Themes

The comments collected from the community survey, workshops and conversations were reviewed by our Council officers. There were nine themes that were mentioned often across all engagement activities. Below is a summary of what people said was most important to improve access and inclusion.

➡ Create Liveable Communities

Parking

- More parking located close to important services, venues and events.
- Regular monitoring and greater enforcement of the Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS).
- Existing accessible parking spaces to be upgraded to comply with current standards.
- Delivery of a campaign to educate the community about how much space to leave when parking near a vehicle with an MPS permit.

Footpaths, shared pathways and crossings

- Safe to use – wide, level, free from hazards or obstacles.
- More tactile markers in the right places.
- Upgraded in areas close to important services – around Wollongong Hospital, Centrelink, Medicare and Council.
- A campaign promoting etiquette for using shared pathways.
- Pedestrian refuges deep enough for a wheelchair user to safely cross the road.
- Kerb ramps that are not too steep and match up to the one on the opposite side of the road.
- More countdown timers installed at busy intersections.

Toilets

- More in the right locations – City Centre, Stuart Park, Botanic Garden, parks, playgrounds, pools and beaches.
- Left unlocked during the day and cleaned regularly.
- Some toilets to be fitted with an adult change tables that have a mechanical hoist.
- A campaign to raise awareness that not everyone who needs to use accessible toilets has a visible disability.

Community Engagement Themes

Events and activities

- Continue to have social stories, quiet tours, 'The Quiet Space', accessible parking and drop-off points and accessible viewing platforms as part of our major events.
- Access matting to make it easier for wheelchair/mobility aid users to move around.
- Accessible viewing areas to become a part of other events like Moonlight Movies or Sunset Cinema.
- Non-Council events to meet access requirements as part of their planning and delivery e.g. providing accessible parking.

Parks and playgrounds

- More playgrounds to be fenced and have shade.
- More accessible play features.
- Footpaths connecting the carpark, equipment, toilets and shelters.

Pools and beaches

- Better promotion of the beach matting and beach wheelchairs.
- More training for Council officers in how to use the beach matting, beach wheelchairs and pool hoists.
- Accessible family change rooms and toilets that have an adult change table with hoists.
- Footpaths connecting the carpark and toilets to the beach or pool.

Community Engagement Themes

Improve Access to our Systems and Processes

- More opportunities to share experiences and be involved in decision making.
- Include images of people with disability in the marketing and promotion of our services and facilities.
- Provide all of our information in plain English.
- Develop a list of accessible places that shows the access features for our website e.g. parks, playgrounds, beaches and pools.
- Documents on our website to be compatible with screen readers.
- Include communication boards at places like pools, libraries and the Wollongong Art Gallery.

Promote Positive Attitudes and Behaviours

- More places designed with the needs and experiences of people with disability in mind.
- Raise awareness of the experiences of people with disability, including people with an invisible disability.
- Normalise disability – talk about it as a strength rather than a problem or issue.
- More opportunities for broader community and people with disability to come together.

Support Access to Meaningful Employment

- Work experience opportunities and entry level positions for people with disability.
- More emphasis placed on testing practical skills as part of our recruitment process.
- Offer mentoring and/or additional support for Council officers with a disability.
- Support social enterprises who support people with disability.
- Improve the accessibility of our workplace.

Create Liveable Communities
The Plan for Action

Liveable communities are places people can move about easily to access services and facilities and participate in community life.

What we will do

➔ **Increase the number of accessible public toilets and accessible adult change facilities**

- Develop and deliver a program to upgrade and install more accessible public toilets and accessible adult change facilities to meet current standards.
- Maintain information about toilets on the National Public Toilet Map.

➔ **Increase the number of accessible parking spaces**

- Develop a priority list to improve and increase the number of spaces.
- Increase the number of accessible parking spaces.
- Develop and implement an accessible parking strategy for the Wollongong CBD.
- Monitor and enforce illegal use.

"The new accessible change facilities at Unanderra Pool are great. They have made such a difference for me taking clients to the pool. It was a real challenge for me to get my clients changed because there wasn't a change area we could fit into, without the lifeguards closing off the rest of the amenity to other pool users" Disability Support Worker March 2020.

➔ **Increase the number of accessible paths of travel to key destinations**

- Increase the number of continuous accessible paths of travel that include parking, footpaths and kerb ramps in our town centres and to key destinations such as recreation and community facilities.

➔ **Improve access to our spaces and streetscapes**

- Use universally accessible park and street furniture in open space and streetscapes.
- Incorporate access as a key feature of our infrastructure projects.
- Provide clear paths of travel along property lines where possible.
- Install tactile/braille wayfinding signage in the Wollongong CBD.

➔ **Increase the number of accessible bus stops and shelters**

- Develop a priority list of bus stops and shelters to upgrade.
- Upgrade priority bus stops and shelters including link to continuous accessible path of travel.



- Increase access to our recreation services and facilities**
- Deliver the actions in the Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019 -2028.
 - Install a fenced accessible playground in the southern suburbs.
 - Include accessible play elements when renewing and installing playgrounds.
 - Include access to parking and seating when upgrading sports grounds and facilities.
 - Improve access at the Botanic Garden.
 - Continue to upgrade our community and heated pools, including the installation of accessible adult change facilities to meet current standards.
 - Continue to upgrade access at the tourist parks and tell the community about these upgrades.
 - Continue to upgrade access at Council leisure centres and support inclusion of people with disability in programs.

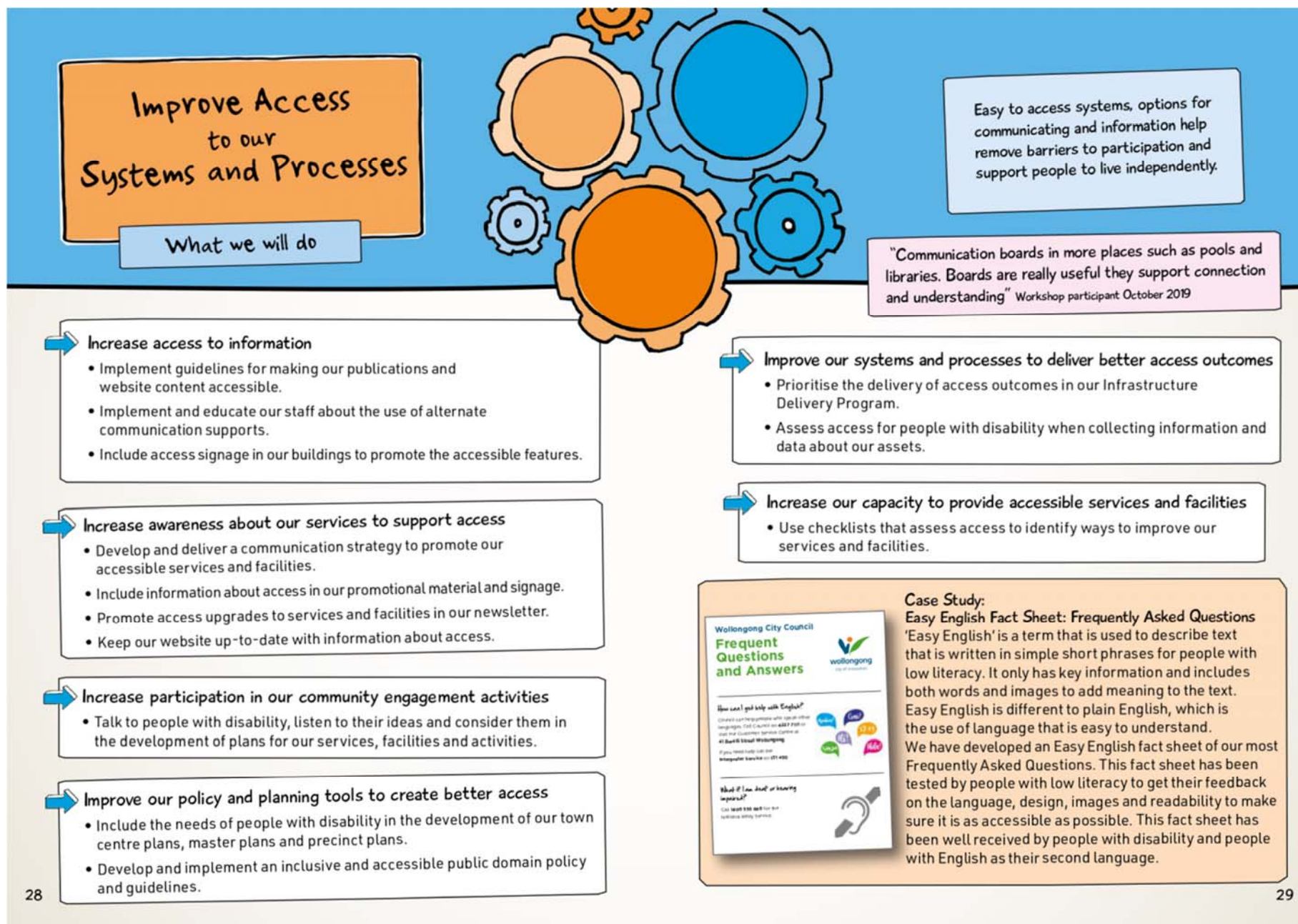
- Increase access and participation in library, community, environment, youth and cultural services programs**
- Promote and support inclusion in all activities at the IPAC, Art Gallery, cultural services, environmental education programs and libraries.
 - Schedule programs for people with disability at the IPAC, Art Gallery, cultural services, environmental education programs and libraries.
 - Continue to promote and support access and inclusion as part of Youth Services activities.

- Increase access to our buildings**
- Undertake access appraisals of our buildings and facilities.
 - Prioritise and include access when renewing and building facilities.



Case Study: Braille Sign Luke's Place

Luke's Place is a fenced playground in Corrimal with accessible play options to support children with disability to play. In 2020, we added a Braille Sign to this playground to help people who are blind or have low vision to get around the playground. The sign includes a map of the playground and provides an opportunity for everyone who visits the playground to learn more about how some children and adults read in this way. This sign is unique and sets a new benchmark for inclusion in playgrounds. We worked with Vision Australia to produce the sign.





Raise awareness about the contribution people with disability make to our community

- Increase the visibility of people with disability in our publications and communications.
- Educate businesses about the importance of providing good access to their business.



Increase participation in our events, festivals and activities

- Continue to implement strategies to improve access and inclusion at our events.
- Work with external event holders to improve access and inclusion at their events.
- Include information about access in our marketing and promotional material.



Undertake programs to promote access and inclusion

- Partner with community organisations to deliver projects that support inclusion.
- Support organisations to build their skills in delivering activities for people with disability.
- Deliver campaigns to promote and support inclusion.

"I would like to register my appreciation for the effort and thought that went into organising the New Year's Eve, at the Harbour, for the fireworks. The chosen site was excellent, with parking only five metres away. Your volunteers were just great, they helped us to carry gear to our spot were very attentive and offered to go to the local shops for coffee or food.

Whoever thought of this, organised it and made it happen deserves a medal or a good pat on the back, I am sure there were many involved in bringing it to a conclusion. We were very comfortable throughout the night and we are looking forward to the next year for the same great experience, our exit from the area and our trip home was excellent." New Year's Eve Participant

Case Study Corrimal Library Autism Friendly Badge

In 2018, Wollongong City Libraries was asked if they were interested in being involved in the Autism Friendly Communities - Corrimal project being run by ASPECT and UoW. Corrimal District Library and Community Centre embraced the opportunity to be a part of this great initiative. Council officers met to review current practices and how we could modify our programs and environment to ensure a more inclusive practice, including the library website.

The review process led to Corrimal Library creating a social story about their website, increasing sensory resources for use by the community, and implementing a story board with all of their children's programs on it. Library staff participated in training on how to identify and communicate effectively with people with autism. Future planning is currently in place for a program that is designed for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their carers.



Support Access to Meaningful Employment

What we will do



Employment contributes towards feelings of self-worth and provides regular social interaction. For most people, employment and economic security are interrelated. Employment can increase an individual's capacity for choice and control over life decisions.

→ Increase employment and learning pathways

- Provide targeted employment opportunities.
- Continue to provide work experience opportunities.
- Continue to support social enterprises that provide employment for people with disability.
- Deliver our Social Procurement Policy.

→ Increase access to employment opportunities

- Undertake research to better understand barriers to employment.
- Review and make improvements to our employment policies, procedures, practices and systems.
- Continue to build relationships and promote vacancies to community networks.

→ Improve access and inclusion in the workplace

- Work with our staff to better understand their needs and how we can support them in the workplace.
- Continue to build our organisations capability to meet the diverse needs of our staff and community.
- Continue to provide experiences for staff to learn about access and inclusion.
- Create opportunities for formal and informal support networks for staff.

→ Create an environment where everyone belongs

- Welcome and celebrate our staff's individual abilities
- Drive a culture of inclusive leadership

"We just want to be treated like any other person, give us a chance... we have a lot to offer." Workshop participant – October 2019.

Case Study: EmployABILITY

The 'EmployABILITY' project, delivered in partnership with Shellharbour City Council, aimed to raise awareness about the employability of people with disability working in paid employment.

Seven local people shared their stories which were designed into posters. The storyboards were launched as part of International Day of People with Disability.

A poet, Elliot Cameron, was contracted to use the stories to produce a slam poem. The poem was performed at the launch of the project. The launch of the project included a round table discussion with attendees to explore the barriers people with disability face in accessing employment.

The panels have since been displayed in various community settings. In the week after International Day of People with Disability the posters were displayed at the Corrimal Community Centre and on our webpage.



Jessica Duncan at the Brewing Up a Storm Café

Delivering the Plan



Governance

The General Manager, Executive and the Senior Leadership Team will sponsor and promote the Plan.

A Steering Group will oversee and monitor the implementation of the actions in the Plan.

Integration

The actions in this Plan will become part of our Delivery Program and Operational Plan and help us to deliver the Community Strategic Plan.

Implementation

An implementation plan that includes timeframes, priorities, resources and responsibilities has been developed to help with the delivery of the Plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation

An evaluation framework with performance indicators has been developed to measure change. Data will be collected and reported throughout the implementation of the Plan. In the final year of the Plan we will measure community satisfaction through a community survey.

Reporting

Regular updates will be provided on our website to report progress.

Progress towards delivering the actions in the Plan will be formally reported as part of our annual reporting processes.

We will prepare and submit reports to the NSW Disability Council as required.

Ongoing Engagement and Review

We will talk with the community regularly to check that the priorities in the Plan are still the same and make changes to the Plan where we need to.



Funding the Plan

Some actions in this Plan are about continuing to do what we do well, and others are about improving the way we do things. Many actions will not cost additional money but require us to do things differently.

However, some actions in the Plan will require additional funds to build something or upgrade an existing facility or service. The money to do this work will be allocated through the annual budget process where possible. At times we may apply for funding from external sources to help achieve the actions in the Plan.



Beach Wheel Chair

Measuring our Progress

The following indicators will help us to measure if we are achieving our vision for an accessible and inclusive city.

Indicator

How it will be Measured

Create Liveable Communities

↑ Number of accessible public toilets and adult lift and change facilities that include hoists.	Council data.
↑ % of people with disability who are satisfied with our accessible public toilets and accessible adult lift and change facilities.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey/ Customer satisfaction measure.
↑ Number of accessible parking spaces in key destinations.	Council data.
↑ % of people with disability who are satisfied with footpaths and paths of travel.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey/ Customer satisfaction measure.
↑ % of people with disability who express satisfaction with our public spaces.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey/ Customer satisfaction measure.
↑ Number of accessible bus stops and shelters.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey/ Customer satisfaction measure.
↑ % of people with disability who are satisfied with our recreation services, community facilities/halls and libraries.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey/ Customer satisfaction measure.
↑ Access provisions at our recreation services, community facilities and libraries.	Council data.
↑ % of people with disability who feel they have the opportunity to participate and are satisfied with our library and cultural activities.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey/ Customer satisfaction measure.

Support Access to Employment

↑ Number of employment pathway workdays for people with disability across our services	Council data.
↑ People with disability are satisfied with Council as a work place. (case studies documented)	Evidence organisational change is happening where required.
↑ Access in our workplaces	Council data.
↑ Number of employment and/or employment pathway workdays provided each year to people with disability by our suppliers.	Council data.

Indicator

How it will be Measured

Providing Accessible Systems and Processes

% of people with disability who can easily access our information.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey.
% of our publications that are accessible and include images of people with disability and include information about access.	Analyse sample of Council publications.
Number of people with disability who have participated in a community engagement activity.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey.
↑ Number of our systems that have incorporated access as a key criterion.	Council data.
% of our staff who have participated in access training and learning opportunities.	Council data.

Promoting Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours

Community projects and campaigns that raise awareness of the positive contribution people with disability make to the community are delivered.	Customer satisfaction measure.
↑ % of people with disability who have participated our events and festivals that are satisfied with those events.	Disability Access & Inclusion Survey/ Customer satisfaction measure.
Partnerships with organisations that deliver positive outcomes for people with disability.	Number of partnerships projects/ Customer Satisfaction measure.

Appendix 1 Access & Inclusion - Legislation & Policy

People with disability, their families and carers have the same rights as all people to access services and facilities. These rights are part of State and Commonwealth policy and legislation which make it unlawful to discriminate against a person with disability.



Figure 1: The relationships between the relevant policy and legislative instruments.
Source: Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines Local Government.

Legislation and Standards that inform Council's Work

- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
- Disability Access to Premises Buildings Standards 2010.
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002.
- Australian Standard (AS 1428) - Design for Access and Mobility.
- Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy 2010.

Photo credit:
The Disability Trust



For more information

Phone: 4227 7111

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Visit: www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au

Council would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of this Plan.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

2020-
2025



Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025

Engagement Report - 2020

Z20/289

The information in this report is based on data collected from community members who chose to be involved in engagement activities and therefore should not be considered representative.

This report is intended to provide a high-level analysis of the most prominent themes and issues. While it's not possible to include all the details of feedback we received, feedback that was relevant to the project has been provided to technical experts for review and consideration.

Introduction

About 4.4 million Australians or 1 in 5 people live with disability. The NSW Disability Inclusion Act was introduced in 2014, requiring all Councils to develop and deliver a Disability Inclusion Action Plan that outlines how they will achieve against the following focus areas:

- Creating liveable communities
- Improving access to systems and processes
- Promoting positive community attitudes and behaviours
- Supporting access to meaningful employment

In Wollongong, an estimated 13,090 people live with a profound or severe disability. Overall 6% of the population of Wollongong require support with their day to day lives due to disability, compared with 5% for Australia. Wollongong City Council endorsed its first Disability Inclusion Action Plan (the Plan) under the new Act in 2016. The 2016-2020 Plan has guided Council in making services, facilities, activities and information more inclusive and accessible. With this Plan in its final year Council is developing a new Plan to continue this strategic direction.

Throughout July – October 2019, Council facilitated community engagement activities to capture the experiences, priorities, thoughts and ideas of people with disability and their carers. The information collected from these engagement activities will help Council identify and better understand the challenges people with disability experience and will be used to set the priorities for the 2020-2025 version of the Plan.

How did we engage the community?

During July – October 2019 people with disability and their carers were invited to share their experiences of living in Wollongong and accessing Council services, facilities, activities and information. The community engagement activities included:

Survey

Open from 23 July – 26 August, the survey was available in hard copy and on Council's website. Hard copies of the survey and collection boxes were located at all Council libraries. Many local organisations shared the survey through their social media, e-mail databases and made hard copies available at their offices and waiting rooms.

A digital version of the survey was available on Council's Engagement HQ webpage. The survey was promoted via Facebook and the Advertiser. It was shared with Council's Register of Interest – Disability Inclusion, Neighbourhood Forums, Walking Cycling Mobility Reference Group as well as a mailing list of community members and organisations with an interest in access and inclusion for people with disability.

Workshops

Five workshops were held:

Date	Location	Who
22 October	Dapto Ribbonwood Centre	People with disability or carers
25 October	Corrimal Community Centre	People with disability or carers
29 October	Wollongong Youth Centre	ASPECT-Cedars Christian College and Holy Spirit College
29 October	Wollongong Youth Centre	Flagstaff and The Disability Trust SLES
19 March	Wollongong City Council	Employees with disability

During the two targeted workshops, people with a disability and their carers spoke with officers from all areas of Council. Conversations centred around the focus areas and provided the opportunity for people with disability to share their experiences with the Council officers.

Young people from ASPECT - Cedars Christian College, Holy Spirit College, Flagstaff and The Disability Trust School Leaver Employment Support (SLES) programs participated in two workshops held at Wollongong Youth Centre. Across the two workshops young people discussed their priorities for the future related to each of the focus areas.

Conversations

Conversations were held on the following dates:

Date	Location	Who
19 August	Kanahooka High School	Kanahooka High School
20 August	Cringila Primary School	Cringila Supported Play Group
29 August	Wollongong TAFE	My Time Carer Support Group

Council officers visited Cringila Supported Play Group and My Time Carer Support Group to hear from parents and carers of children with disability. They shared their experiences, thoughts and ideas about what could be done to help their children remain involved in community life as they grow older.

Another conversation was held with Year 10 Students at Kanahooka High to hear the student's ideas about how Wollongong could be more inclusive and accessible for people with disability.

How many people were involved?

275 people shared their ideas as part of the community engagement.



Engagement Results

Council contracted IRIS Research to analyse and present the data collected from the community survey. The results of the 2019 survey have been compared to the results of the 2015 survey and presented in a report (see Z19/238695). The results of the community engagement have been analysed and themes identified.

The findings of the report and comments collected from the survey, workshops and conversations have been combined and analysed. There were nine themes across all methods of engagement. Below is a summary of what the participants would like Council to focus on in the future.

Parking

- More parking located close to important services, venues and events
- Regular monitoring and greater enforcement of the Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS)
- Existing accessible parking spaces to be upgraded to comply with current standards
- Delivery of a campaign to educate the community about how much space to leave when parking near a vehicle with an MPS permit

Footpaths, shared pathways and crossings

- Safe to use – wide, level, free from hazards or obstacles
- More tactile markers in the right places
- Upgraded in areas close to important services – around Wollongong Hospital, Centrelink, Medicare and Council
- A campaign promoting etiquette for using shared pathways
- Pedestrian refuges deep enough for a wheelchair user to safely cross the road
- Kerb ramps that aren't too steep and match up to the one on the opposite side of the road
- More countdown timers installed at busy intersections

Toilets

- More in the right locations – City Centre, Stuart Park, Botanic Garden, parks, playgrounds, pools and beaches
- Left unlocked during the day and cleaned regularly
- Some to be fitted with an adult change table that has a mechanical hoist
- A campaign to raise awareness that not everyone who needs to use accessible toilets has a visible disability

Events and activities

- Continue to have social stories, quiet tours, 'The Quiet Space', accessible parking and drop off points and accessible viewing platforms as part of major Council events
- Access matting to make it easier for wheelchair/mobility aid users to move around
- Accessible viewing areas to become a part of other events like Moonlight Movies or Sunset Cinema
- Non-council events to meet certain access requirements as part of their planning and delivery e.g. providing accessible parking

Parks and playgrounds

- More playgrounds to be fenced and have shade
- More accessible play features
- Footpaths connecting the carpark, equipment, toilets and shelters

Pools and beaches

- Better promotion of Council's beach matting and beach wheelchairs
- More training for staff in how to use the beach matting, beach wheelchairs or pool hoists
- Accessible family change rooms and toilets that have an adult change tables and hoists.
- Footpaths connecting the carpark and toilets to the beach or pool

Community attitudes and behaviours

- More places designed with the needs and experiences of people with disability in mind
- Raise awareness of the experiences of people with disability, including people with an invisible disability
- Normalise disability – talk about it as a strength rather than a problem or issue
- More opportunities for broader community and people with disability to come together

Information and Communication

- More opportunities to share experiences and be involved in decision making
- Images of people with disability included in the marketing and promotion of Council services and facilities
- All Council information to be written in plain English
- A list of accessible places and their access features to be listed on Council's website e.g. parks, playgrounds, beaches and pools
- Documents on Council's website to be compatible with screen readers
- Communication boards, like the ones at the playgrounds, at other places like pools, libraries and Wollongong Art Gallery.

Employment

- Work experience opportunities and entry level positions for people with disability
- More emphasis placed on testing practical skills as part of Council recruitment process
- Offer mentoring and/or additional support for staff
- Support social enterprises who support people with disability
- Improve the accessibility of our workplace

What next?

Council would like to thank everyone who shared their experiences, thoughts and ideas as part of the community engagement. The information we've collected will be used to develop the priorities, strategies and actions for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025. A draft version of the Plan will go on public exhibition mid-2020. Community feedback will be reviewed, and the Plan will be presented at a Council Meeting for adoption.